

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-13. **(Cancel)**

14. **(New)** Modular internal combustion engine comprising an engine housing with a crankshaft drive having at least one reciprocating piston in a cylinder, which acts on a crankshaft by means of a connecting rod, and a variable-speed gear box connected to the crankshaft via a disengaging clutch, and a gearbox output train which connects to at least one drive shaft of a vehicle, wherein the internal combustion engine is provided with least one main module including the subassemblies engine housing, crankshaft drive, variable-speed gearbox, and gearbox output train, and at least one auxiliary module attachable to the main module, and wherein no mechanical connection between the variable-speed gearbox and the gearbox output train is provided within the main module but a rotational connection is facilitated by attaching a first auxiliary module to the main module.

15. **(New)** Internal combustion engine according to claim 14, wherein the main module includes at least one of the parts crankshaft, mass balancer shaft, piston, connecting rod or switchable clutch.

16. **(New)** Internal combustion engine according to claim 14, wherein the first auxiliary module contains at least one gear step selected from the following group: simple gear, reverse gear, reduction gear, crawler reduction gear.

17. **(New)** Internal combustion engine according to claim 16, wherein the axis distance of the gear step corresponds to the axis

distance between an output shaft of the variable-speed gearbox and a secondary input shaft of the gearbox output train.

18. **(New)** Internal combustion engine according to claim 14, wherein the first auxiliary module has the same housing wall in all gear variants.

19. **(New)** Internal combustion engine according to claim 14, wherein a second auxiliary module with an output gear for a power take-off shaft can be attached to a gear shaft of the variable-speed gearbox.

20. **(New)** Internal combustion engine according to claim 14, wherein a third auxiliary module with a shiftable reverse gear for the variable-speed gearbox can be attached to the main module.

21. **(New)** Internal combustion engine according to claim 14, wherein a fourth auxiliary module with a differential gear for the gearbox output train can be attached to the main module.

22. **(New)** Internal combustion engine according to claim 21, wherein a fifth auxiliary module with an output driving gear for the gearbox output train can be attached to the main module or the fourth auxiliary module.

23. **(New)** Internal combustion engine according to claim 14, wherein a sixth auxiliary module with a centrifugal clutch can be attached to the main module at the input side of the variable-speed gearbox.

24. **(New)** Internal combustion engine according to claim 14, wherein the main module includes an engine housing configured for one cylinder or an engine housing for two cylinders.

25. **(New)** Internal combustion engine according to claim 14, wherein at least five shafts are positioned in one and the same plane.

26. **(New)** Internal combustion engine according to claim 25, wherein at least crank shaft, balancer shaft, first gearbox shaft, second gearbox shaft and first secondary shaft are positioned in one and the same plane.

27. **(New)** Internal combustion engine according to claim 25, wherein the plane is a first partitioning plane between two housing parts.

28. **(New)** Internal combustion engine according to claim 14, wherein the main module can be used for at least two types of vehicles from the group of motor-rickshaws, ATVs, small tractors and micro-cars.

29. **(New)** Method for the production of engine housings for internal combustion engines with one or more cylinders, wherein all surfaces to be machined and all bores of the engine housing with n cylinders have the same position as a subset of all surfaces and bores of a similar engine housing with a higher number $m > n$ of cylinders and that the engine housing with n cylinders is machined on a working station whose tools are configured and adjusted for the machining of the similar engine housing with the higher number m of cylinders.